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## DUNLUCE CASTLE, COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

We have always considered this one of the most interesting ruins to be met with in Ireland. It is situated about five miles from the Giant's Causeway, close to the road-side. It stands on an insulated rock that rises one hundred feet above the level of the sea, and whose perpendicular sides appear as if forming part of the walls—while its base, by the continual action of the waves, has been formed into spacious and rather curious caverns.\* It is separated from the mainland by a chasm twenty feet broad, and one hundred feet deep—the only approach to it being by a kind of self-supported arch or wall about eighteen inches wide, below which the foaming wave dashes with considerable violence, even in calm weather.† Across this narrow and dangerous footway the adventurous tourist must pass, if disposed to examine this interesting ruin, which forms one of the most picturesque and commanding objects along the whole line of coast. It is built of columnar basalt, in many instances so placed as to show their polygonal sections. The castle on the rock contained a small court-yard, and several apartments of considerable dimensions. A small vaulted room on the eastern side, called the Banshee's Tower, and said to be still the residence of that aerial being who in days of yore attended the family of the McDonnells, is particularly pointed out by the guide. In the extreme north point, the ruins have all the appearance of overhanging the sea; the walls and battlements beneath having given way, the yawning chasm exposes the dreadful precipice over the cave's mouth, one hundred and fifty feet below—into which, it is said, one stormy day in the year 1639, while the Marchioness of Buckingham resided here, the cook and eight other servants, together with a good part of the kitchen, dinner, &c. were in a moment precipitated. At the land side a very considerable area is covered with buildings, which were at one period surrounded by massive walls, supposed to have been occupied by the soldiers or men-at-arms who were retained for the defence of the castle. It was, from time to time, the scene of several rather important exploits.

By whom it was originally erected is not known; but at a very early period it was possessed by an Irish chieftain of the name of M'Quillan, a member of a once powerful family in the north of Ireland; it afterwards belonged to the family of the McDonnells, Earls of Antrim, who made it their constant residence until about the year 1750.

There is a most delightful prospect on every side from these ruins, around which the waves of the Atlantic at times roll with great violence—the entire shore being studded with huge rocks, over which the sea breaks most furiously.

## ALLEY SHERIDAN, OR THE RUNAWAY MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY."  
(Concluded from page 400.)

"What's keepin' that girl in the room?" said widow Sheridan. "Alley, will you bring your aunt's holy water to her? My sowl," she added, when no reply was made, "but I'll lay my life she's away wid herself!" and she snatched a candle, with which she surveyed the room, and ascertained, to her utter dismay, that Alley was gone. She found the window open, and the bird flown.

Loud and vehement was the manifestation of grief, noise, and confusion which followed this disclosure; but from none was the clamour of despair and indignation louder than from the aunt. A rapid search commenced

\* These caverns are capable of containing a number of boats, and in them are to be seen numerous spars, crystallizations, &c. They communicate with the castle, and are well worthy the notice of the curious traveller.

† On close examination, it appears that there was originally another wall, which ran across the chasm, parallel to the former; and that, by laying boards across these, an easy passage might occasionally be made for the benefit of a garrison.  
—*Edm. Ant.*

about the premises, in the course of which Alley and a party of horsemen, for it was clear moonlight, were discovered riding up the hill. In an instant the well-watered guns and pistols were in requisition, and a keen pursuit commenced after the obnoxious party. The widow's friends were, it is true, rather unqualified for a brisk race, many of them being as strongly inclined to retrograde as advance. The attempt of rescuing Alley, however, was made, and would have proved successful if Mullin's party had happened to have a much longer stretch of the country to cross, for their route lay over ditches and rough upland, covered with swamps and brushwood. In consequence of this, the pursuers gained upon them considerably. So near, indeed, was the widow's guard, that when Mullin was topping a small hill, the former were at the bottom. Among the first in the chase was Paul the Shot, with Bridget over his shoulder—and it will be recollected, that, from his late arrival, not only was he less advanced in liquor than any of the rest, but that Bridget herself escaped the fate of the fire-arms on the bed.

"Tarenation!" says Paul, "thundhre-an'-thump! but they'll bate us as they get out on the road before we wing some o' them. Hould, be the shot o' my pouch, if there isn't a bagabone peepin' out at us from behind the ditch as a spy. Here's at you, man alive; take this, whoever you are—(whish, slap)—well done, Paul the Shot."

The object fell off the ditch, and Paul, on whose mind the dread of murder fell with rapid descent, became instantly paralyzed with horror.

"The Laud above forgive me this night—my sowl to happiness, but he's peppered, and I'll swing for him—blessed mother o' heaven, what's this! Evans, go—I'm not able; go, man, and see who it is. Murderer sheery! Oh, Vara, Vara, what will you and Phiddre, that I intinded for the church, say, when you hear that I'm to swing for murder!" And he commenced a howl of the most ludicrous grief imaginable.

"Paul, you have done for one, any how; you have shed innocent blood this night, you unfortunate man, you! Who did you aim at on the other side o' the hill, that you shot poor Vara?"

"Vara! what do you mane?" said Paul, horror-struck and staggering.

"Why, your own Vara that happened to be behind the ditch, and you settled her!"

Paul's howl had now risen to a roar, continuous and incessant.

"Ay, indeed," added Evans, "you have shot Vara, your goat, that was grazin' upon the ditch."

Paul paused suddenly—"What," said he, "is it only the gower?" and he ran over in a state of tremor to ascertain the fact. He then put his hands to his sides, and danced for five minutes to his own music, which was not a whit less grotesque than his grief. Evan's information was correct; he actually for once had hit the object at which he aimed, and his joy was excessive on discovering that he had not committed murder.

This shot, however, was probably the means of Alley's escape; for the pause which it occasioned in the pursuit gave Mullin's friends time to gain the road, which they had no sooner reached than the speed of their horses was increased in a manner that rendered all fear of being overtaken unnecessary.

We will now bring our readers to a gentleman's residence, about a mile and a half from widow Sheridan's house; the hour, twelve or one o'clock at night. A thundering rap comes to the hall-door; and in a few minutes a voice calls out,

"Why thin, might one make bould to ax who gave that delicate little rap? Spake, if you be fat."

"Is that Paddy?"

"Ayeh! all that's left o' me."

"Is the high constable widin, Paddy?"

"Why, 'tisn't widout you'd have him to be at this hour o' the night, man alive. I ought to know the cut o' yer tongue—Is that Frank Neal?"

"So my modher says. Why thin, faix, Paddy, I don't like to be houldin' discourse wid you through the door, more in regard o' the drop o' dhrink I have in my pocket here; and, besides, I want to see Misther Little, for him—

self's the boy that likes a bit o' sport, as a duck does a shower."

The door was opened with surprising alacrity.

"What's wrong, Frank?"

"The sorra taste at all, but every thing right, Paddy. Look into that bottle first, and then tell the masher that James Mullin and Alley Sheridan's comin' to him as a 'runaway couple.' Start now, your sowl, for he must inspect them on horseback, to bear witness that it's *her* that's runnin' away wid *him*, so he must see her before him on the saddle, clane and dacent."

"I thought Mickle Gartland was to have her."

"So did the mother of her for that matter, Paddy; but she tuck the liberty of differin' a thrifle from them both, the jewel. Take another pull o' this, and be off for the masher, man alive—don't you hear them comin' in full style up the avney."

Mr. Little was a young man of a highly respectable family, who, in consequence of his frank and good-humoured character, was exceedingly popular with the peasantry, although the office which he held was one in which it required great address to retain their confidence and good-will. He was, however, a humourist, and frequently contrived to adjust many differences among them in the discharge of his duty. Being remarkable for good sense, and a perception of the genius and humour of the people, he had many opportunities of compromising the quarrels and enmity of factions, and such transient disputes as originated at fairs, markets, and other places of their rural amusements.

When he understood the nature of the business on which his interference was solicited—particularly the necessity of his presence to witness Alley on horseback before Mullin, in order to prevent the danger of a prosecution for abduction, which Mrs. Sheridan, anticipating this event, had threatened—he lost no time in dressing himself—a task which, in this instance, he performed with unusual mirth. When ready to appear, he perceived the cavalcade near the door; nor was his mirth lessened by its singular and original appearance. About a score of stout young fellows, mounted upon bare-backed horses of every description, ranged themselves a little behind Mullin and Alley, both of whom advanced, that he might be enabled to identify them, and give, should he be required, an accurate testimony of Mullin's being the party abducted. Mullin himself could scarcely restrain his mirth, on requesting his attention to this grotesque and ludicrous circumstance, although his natural delicacy of feeling prevented him from indulging in any levity that might be offensive to her, who made such an unusual departure from decorum for his sake. His companions, however, were less scrupulous: their mirth was excessive, for to them it was "fun" of the first water. Their enjoyment of the "spree," however, was no proof of their want of attachment to Mullin; for every man of them had either a scythe, a flail, a pitchfork, or a hook tied to a pole, with which they would have defended him to the last drop of their blood. It was truly a providential circumstance that no collision took place between Mrs. Sheridan's party and them, as, in that case, although they considered the matter only as a "spree," lives would certainly have been lost on both sides.

"Mr. Little," said Mullin, "you can bear witness that I'm clear and clane run away wid—carried off by Alley Sheridan here, agin my own free will and consent—the devil a less it is. Alley, don't you acknowledge that you tuck me away, a young, innocent, harmless crathur, as I am, from father, and mother, and friends, to lodge me wid Misher Little here?"

Alley smiled, and, could the change on her cheek have been seen, blushed also.

"Hem!—why to be sure I did; and a blessed prize I have got of you, you thief," she added, in an arch undertone: "faix, James, I'll pay you for this, one day or other."

"Don't be afraid, Mullin," replied Little; "I'll bear witness to what you suffered by this outrage. The law in this case is completely evaded. Miss Sheridan, let me assist you to dismount. Come in; there are candles in the parlour, and we'll talk over this matter."

"Faix," said a droll, ill-looking fellow as ever was created, "I'm a purty delicate boy myself, nate and gentle, and nobody has run away wid *me*, yet; however, we won't despair, as far as beauty goes, any how—who knows what's before me?"

"Before you!" replied another, "it's wind and weather he deserves to be fed upon, that wouldn't guess that 'tisn't drowned you'll be, Tady, as long as two yards of himp can be got for a shillin'."

"Well, boys, see what it is to have the breedin'! Oh—sarve how pillite Misher Little hands her into the parlour, as if he had her on a clane plate—ha, ha, ha!"

"Boys," said a politician, "I wisht the country had more of his kind in it, and there would be plenty of pace, and oceans of happiness; not like the rascals that rob and rack-rint us, as if we were slaves, by their agents an' procthors, an' bumbailies, rappin' an' rivin' the heart's blood out of us, to spind their pleasures in farrin lands, an' thin we can't see their faces, to get an ounce of justice, let us be whipped an' thramped on ever so. My curse upon them! By this an' by that! for my own part, I'll never spare a prod of a bagnet, nor scruple lay in the the weesly bit of coal an' the thatch together, till we get them to mend their courses, an' live on their estates."

"*Be dhu hush!* !\* hem,—a fine night, Paddy," said his companion, addressing him cautiously, but elevating his voice to the other, in order to put the indiscreet speaker on his guard—"Paddy, how goes it, you spalpeen?—have you any news from the races?"

"Middlin', I thank you, Phil; sorra word, for I wasn't at them. What news from Athnasallagh?"

"Never a thing worth talking of: this runaway is the newest news at the present spakin'."

"Troth, it's the quare runaway; but I'll tell you a secret, boys: Mickle Gartland will be on for a rescue to-morrow, if Widow Sheridan makes him believe that Alley wint widout her own consent. The masher widin knows Mickle's character to a shavin', an' he's now discorsin' the two about how they're to put the copin'-stone on the business to-morrow."

This was true, and Little himself felt considerable difficulty as to the means of bringing the matter to an amicable issue. He knew it was probable that Gartland, supported by the mother, might become troublesome and unmanageable; but he was too well acquainted with the honourable and manly delicacy with which the peasantry act in circumstances of this nature. When a runaway occurs in Ireland, no motive could induce a young man to wed a girl who had voluntarily "gone off" with another. Her virtue must not only be free from every stain, but her conduct from the imputation of any act which would seem by its indiscretion to place her in a questionable situation; otherwise Paddy, with all his violence and outrage, would scorn her with the most indignant loftiness of spirit.

When Little conducted Alley and Mullin, together with their most confidential friends into the parlour, he addressed them as follows:—

"I protest, Mullin, your conduct has staggered me not a little this night. Why, man, a thief might as well take refuge with a magistrate, or a debtor with a bailiff who carries a writ against him, as you to run off with your neighbour's daughter, and march, as I believe you were glad to do, in double-quick time, to lodge her with the high constable. Not a man on the face of the earth, but an Irishman, would do it. How will you manage?"

"How will yourself manage, Sir?" replied Mullin; "you must fight the battle out for us, now that you tuck it in hand—not that we mane to be idle ourselves, please goodness, if it goes to that;—but as for carryin' her off, sure I have yourself to prove that *she* kidnapped *me* clane to your own house."

"True, I forgot that. Well, I believe the best plan is to keep you both for the night—Alley with Mrs. Little, and you with the butler—and in the morning to send for the priest, Alley's mother, and Sir William R—, your landlord; we'll then try what can be done to arrange

matters to the satisfaction of all parties. If Gartland and his friends come, we'll have a scene, however, and not a very pleasant one, I fear."

"In regard of Gartland, Misther Little, I don't care three shtraws for what he can do; I have a crow to pluck wid him as it is: if you can smooth the mother, that's all I want. My life, however, whatever happens, must be taken before I part wid *Alley*, that I swear, b——"

"Hold, Mullin, no swearing before the lady, Sir," replied Little, on seeing the young fellow's eyes beginning to glance with that fiery and headstrong determination which so often produces, among persons of his class, such destructive consequences: "leave the matter to me," he continued, "and be calm, otherwise I neither can nor will promise to interest myself in the business, precisely as I intend to do."

He then ordered Mullin's companions to go peaceably home; and after committing *Alley*, whose diffidence kept her silent, to the care of Mrs. Little, who had risen, and Mullin to that of the butler, he retired to rest.

Next morning Mr. Little wrote to Sir William R—— and the parish priest, and was answered by the appearance of these gentlemen in person. They entertained a just apprehension that serious disturbance between the friends of Gartland, Mullin, and *Alley* herself, would very probably result from the elopement, particularly at the ensuing fair, as the two rivals and their friends, as was already known, had threatened to put the matter to a trial of strength. They were, therefore, too well acquainted with the habits of the people, not to know, that if a faction-fight had once commenced between them, it might be kept up in fairs and markets for centuries to come.

Soon after the arrival of the gentlemen, *Alley's* mother, with her son Owen, and the aunt, who carried a bundle of *Alley's* clothes under her arm, came, together with a dozen of their relatives; and immediately after them, Gartland, with his father, three brothers, and half a dozen able-bodied cousins of every degree. Nor was Mullin left unsupported for the coming struggle, having been, early that morning, reinforced by twelve or fourteen of those who attended him on the preceding night, together with his father and two brothers.

Having been all arranged in the hall, the gentlemen proceeded to reconcile them. In the mean time a large crowd was assembled on the lawn, anxious to know the result, or to take separate interests, should there be a fight.

"My good woman," said Sir William, addressing Mrs. Sheridan, "will you tell us candidly the cause of this unusual commotion among the people? I ask *you* for an explanation, because I understand the conduct of your daughter has in some degree occasioned it."

*Alley* blushed deeply at this unintentional allusion: nor did her embarrassment escape observation, particularly that of Mullin and her aunt. The natural choler of the old woman overcame her, and she stepped forward before Mrs. Sheridan had time to reply:

"It's a lie, Sir William; it's a big lie, my lardship: *dhamno sheery woo'um*, but it is; an' but!"

"Whisht, you ould thief," said Paul, plucking her softly by the gown; "by the shot o' my pouch, you'll be thransported for callin' Sir William a liar, an' him a grand jury-man o' the nation."

"Plase your worship, Sir William," said Mullin, stepping forward in a very determined manner, "as a gentleman, Sir, you might have begun with blamin' me instid o' the girl; an' I say, without carin' who says to the contrary, that she did *not* occasion this ruction o' people that's about the place; therefore begin agin, if you plase, an' place the blame, if there be any, on them that deserve it most."

During this interruption, *Alley's* aunt, who was in a state of great terror, in consequence of Paul's hint about giving Sir William the lie, now came forward to explain—which she did by ducking up and down with the regularity of machinery—and, in her own way, endeavouring to make an excuse for what she had said of him.

"Arrah, Sir William, ahagur, as I'm alive, Sir, what I said about the lie, your Reverence, was only to give you

the denial, avourneen, an' that I did for *Alley's* sake, flat as a griddle, yer honour! You see, Sir William, wid reverence be it spoken, bad cess to the word of thruth, good, bad, or indifferent, was in it. No, faix; I'd as soon fly in the air, as to say you'd tell any thing barrin' the rale outs an' ins of the whole noration. A grand jury-man of the nation! Oh, blessed stars! didn't I come well over it?"

All this while Mrs. Sheridan had the corner of her apron to her eyes, while she glanced with deep resentment at Mullin and her daughter, as the cause of what she considered so irremediable an affliction. Up to this moment she had not an opportunity of speaking, but now she availed herself of the first opening to detail her grievances.

"Ogh, an' it's thrue for you, Sir William; that brine-oge standin' beside her, tuck her thrum me without rhyme or rason in life, an' he not a match for the likes of her, within fifteen score of guineas, Sir, plase your honour. An' if there's law or justice to be had, I'll bring him over the coals, your honour, for the same thing; throth, will I, James Mullin! You're there to the fore, an' I'll make it a black business to you, the longest day you live; for your nothin' else—plase your honour—than a sconce, that wants, by manes o' that green-horn of a girl, to scheme me out of her penny o' money, that I had to fortune her off in credit an' dacency."

"An' do you presume for to call a son o' mine a sconce, Mrs. Sheridan?" replied old Mullin, "since we must 'misthress' you; by the same token that you're the first of your family that ever was 'misthressed.' A sconce, Ma'am! an' this to the Mullins of Edinnasamblagh! Saints above, listen to what ould Andy Linahan's daughter says, forgettin' that your mother sat over your father's coffin, on the road-side, to ax charity for his berrin, when myself an' my forefathers had full and plinty o' the world. —A schemer! from the woman that tuck in your pipe-suckin' *dhuring*\* of a husband, who was marrid upon you in a mistake of his own, but the sorra a taste of yours. Are you answered now, Ma'am? Ax the Magraths of Tullymuddin, an' they'll give you the outs an' ins of the whole desate."

"I'm not ashamed of my family, *Misther* Mullin," replied widow Sheridan, sailing over to him with a hand on each side: "no, the sorra a taste. If we wor poor, that's the worst that can be said of us. We *rae* by our hard work an' honesty, *Misther* Mullin; an' that's more nor can be said of you, *Misther* Mullin! Do you remember your grandfather, that was body-sarvant to ould Square Blackberry, many a year before you wor born, how he came to be the first great man o' the family, *Misther* Mullin? Eh? does that jog your memory? Arrah, why thin, man, there never was one belongin' to me ever wore plush breeches an' a white coat wid green bindin', *Misther* Mullin! Nor we didn't rise in the world by makin' ourselves dirty blacklegs† for a drunken square! Maybe you're answered now, *Mister* Mullin! Poor, indeed! Arrah, to the ould *diowol* I pitch you, man alive!"

"Come, come," said Father O'Flaherty, "there must be no recrimination here; neither Sir William, nor Mr. Little, nor myself, will put up with it. Jem Mullin, you're a boy of sense, and will give up the girl to her mother, when you see she's against you, and bent on Gartland here; so let them be married, in the name of God, and every thing end peaceably. Gartland, are you willing to take the girl, if Mullin gives her up?"

"What say you to that, Gartland?" inquired Sir William.

"Plase your honour, if Jem Mullin will clear her, Sir, on the althar, I'll take her, but not without it."

Mullin's eyes shot fire as he rushed at his rival. "Mane villan!" he ~~cried~~ <sup>thought</sup> to think that the girl would so far forget herself as to make such a thing necessary at all! Let me go, I say: as sure as he's alive, I'll make hawk's mate of him for that word; don't hould me, Mr. Little. Well, I don't care about you or Sir William, or

\* A silent, lounging, stupid person.

† Blackleg, in many parts of Ireland, signifies a 'go-between.'

fifty priests, the man that spakes a word against that girl's discretion,\* will rue it to the core! Well, well! wait; I'll meet you in the fair for this, Gartland; never mind, my good fellow, you'll pay for it."

During this paroxysm, the old aunt clapped him lustily on the back, exclaiming—"Ogh! but the blood's in you, a bouchal: an' but it's kind family for you to show the 'spree!' The dirty spalpeen! he deserves it; for only the mane dhrop's in him, he wouldn't *even*† a bad thought to the decent colleen—the purse-proud beggarman! faix, you'll get it, you thief: there's a cudgel steeped for you!"

The presence of those in the room, however, prevented a quarrel: and Little, who had great influence over Mullin, pacified him.

"Jim," said the father, "if you take my advice, you'll wash your hands clane out o' the family; the girl's a good, an honest, and a modest girl—but you may get a good wife; so throw the ould woman's dirty guineas to her, and give up the girl."

"'Tis a good advice," said the priest, "and you won't have the worse luck for obeying him; besides, I, that am your priest and confessor, lay it upon you."

"*Dhamno sheery* be from the morsel itself," exclaimed the aunt, clapping him once more upon the back: "hould fast, yer sowl; show the blood o' the Mullens, Jem agra; if you part with her, you'll never rue it but waunst, and that 'ill be all your life. look at her, 'tis as white as a sheet she is, for fraid you'd show the *garran bane*,‡ and let yourself be bullied out of her. Hould fast, a bouchal; hould fast, I say!"

"Is that old woman deranged? asked Sir William: "she appears to be mad—quite unsettled."

"Mad, inagh! The heavens be your bed, Sir William, darling: stand the colleen's friend, your Lardship. Wurr-rah, man alive—Vischount jewel, I mane—won't you show fair play an' perplexity, anyhow. How would you like, if you war a colleen—an' it's you that 'ud be the darlin' an' beauty all out, barring the beard and whiskers—fair play is all we want, you Ladyship."

In spite of the bad feeling which pervaded the hostile parties, the old woman's oratory produced very general mirth, which, perhaps, contributed more than any thing else to assuage in some degree the passions by which they were agitated.

"As to the fortune," replied Mullin to his father and the priest, "to show yees all that it makes no maxim with me, I tell you, Mrs. Sheridan, that I'd not dirty my fingers wid a penny of it. You thought it was *that* I was after—you see your mistake, ma'am; but as for the girl, I'll never give her up while I've life!"

"By the shot o' my pouch," said Paul, "the young man's beside himself, clane and clear, to go for to throw away the fortune, and keep the girl."

"An' it's myself," replied Mrs. Sheridan, "will spind five pounds of it, or I'll thansport you out of the country, for taking her away thrum me; you know it's agin the law, and if I should hire six counsellors, I'll make you suffer—ay will I, give one good half ginney to counsellor O'Connell, and another to counsellor Shales, to make great speeches and norations, that 'ill send you over. You common thief, to take your disadvantage of a helpless unprojected widdy—but it's asy known I'm a lone woman, or I wouldn't be put upon the way I am," and she burst into clamorous grief and abuse.

"Mrs. Sheridan," said Mr. Little, with a lurking smile beneath the gravity he assumed—"I must set you right upon the matter of law. Mullin did not steal your daughter; on the contrary, ma'am, he took her away in the most legal manner possible, strictly according to form; and if you are determined on going to law, I must bear witness that she—hem—*that your daughter rode before him on the horse*, and in that case, you know, and everybody knows, the law acquits him—hem!"

This was overwhelming intelligence to the widow; for the fact is, that the peasantry thought, and we believe think still, that in cases of "runaways," if the female is

placed foremost on the horse, the law is completely evaded, inasmuch as it appears that the act of abduction is perpetrated by her, and not by the wooer.

"Saints above! what's this I hear?—On, 'tis ruined I am—I know it does, plase yer honour; but he must give her up, or get the three hundher, and lay down on the nail guinea for guinea wid me, or I'll rise the country, and take her out of his heart's blood."

"Mullin," said Sir William, "you must surrender the girl, Sir; I insist upon it, if her mother continues to claim her."

"I'd be sorry to go agin you, Sir William, but I never will; an' them that takes her 'ill take her through my body."

"Och, och, my darlin' that you war," exclaimed the aunt—"hould to that Jim, agra!—we'll conjeckthur over thim at last."

"Mrs. Sheridan," said the priest, "I have used every thing in reason to make him give her up; but I tell you that yer too stiff-necked yourself, ma'am, and it doesn't become you to make such a rout about it; I say he's good enough for your daughter, not making little of the colleen. You forget yourself, ma'am; his brother's a priest, ma'am, an' it sits very poorly upon you to refuse your child to the brother of a priest."

"I think so too," added Sir William; "Mullin is of a decent honest family, Mrs. Sheridan; and although not so wealthy as Gartland, yet he is sufficiently independent to maintain your daughter in comfort. Money cannot give your daughter happiness with a husband she cannot love. Gartland, are you willing to give up the girl?" he added, addressing Gartland.

"By no manes, yer honour; if it was only to tache him that his bouncin' and bully-raggin' won't do wid me, Sir, plase yer honour. I'll show him, since he's put me to it, that I am as good a man as he is, and can gather as good a faction."

"Plase yer honour, Mr. Little," observed Paul the Shot, apart to Little, "I think that it's pride privints Gartland, more nor any thing else, from denouncin' her, lest the country might think that it came from fear of Mullin, who's the very mischief entirely wid the cudgel, and so is his faction. In my opinion, that's the visitation o' the whole thing. If you could but take Mullin and him on the soft side, you might settle it; and as for father Flaherty, he'll soon knock the mettle out o' the ould woman!"

Little saw the truth of this remark, and determined to act accordingly.

"We have," said he, "very improperly omitted appealing to Miss Alley herself, on a matter where she is principally concerned; Gartland I know to be a young fellow of honour and spirit, who, I am sure, if he hears his refusal from her own lips just now before all present, will not be mean enough to hold out after being refused; he's afraid of no man, or of no party of men, but I know he will act with spirit. Now, Miss Sheridan, on which of these young men are your affections fixed? Speak candidly."

"Plase yer honour," she modestly replied, "I have no ill-will whatsoever to Mickle Gartland, but I can't like him, and he's not come to this day widout hearin' it from my own lips; I never desaved him, nor kept back the thruth. James Mullin—hem—I—I—The timid girl could proceed no farther, but, after giving a tender look at Mullin, she burst into tears, and in the unconscious impulse of love and innocence, laid her head on his shoulder, and sobbed aloud.

Sir William looked in every direction of the room, and the priest's nasal horn resounded a somewhat melancholy note. The aunt went over to the niece, and taking her in her arms, kissed her tenderly, wiped her eyes with her apron, then shook her head at Mrs. Sheridan, exclaiming, "*Dher manum*, woman, but you're breakin' the colleen's heart, so you are!"

"For my own part," said Gartland, "I am satisfied now, and would have been so long ago, only for the mother, and Mullin's brow-bating. Jim, before all present, I give her up—at the same time, it's neither from fear nor favour of you—I'm ready to meet you any day, me and mine, agin you and yours—but as for Alley, keep her, and God bless her, for she's the moral of a good girl."

\* Virtue.

† Impute.

‡ White horse—cowardice; a phrase which the country people trace to Shemus's flight on one at the battle of the Boyne.

Mullin stepped over and grasped his hand, "Mickle," said he, "you war never a bad man,\* and I'm ready and willin' to bear witness, that you'd do nothing for fear of the best sojer† that ever stepped on black leather—and while my name's Mullén, I'll never forget this behaviour, and it'll be ydur own fault if ever we have a cool word agin."

A brisk crack of the fingers from the aunt, accompanied by a triumphant display of that old accompaniment of eloquence the *supplio pedis*, sounded through the room, as she addressed Mrs. Sheridan:

"Hah, maybe ye'll be more worser nor sthrangers—nor black sthrangers, we may say—maybe you'll show some bowels for your own flesh and blood—and if you do, sure it's only time for you to think of it, any way."

"Never," replied Mrs. Sheridan, "barring he can lay down guinea for guinea wid me."

"Now, Mrs. Sheridan," said the priest, "I waited patiently to thry you, ma'am, to give you fair play—but, afther all, you're any thing but a sensible woman, that would look far before her. You refuse your colleen, ma'am, to Jim Mullin, and his brother a priest—his only brother too—ma'am. Now, did you ever take it into your head to think, or ask yourself whose children will come in for his property when he dies?"

Mrs. Sheridan started at this new thought—"Eh!" the priest continued, "have I you now, ma'am? Upon my credit and reputayshun, only for the daughter's sake of you, I'd be the man myself that would prevint Jim Mullin from marrying into your family."

This was an argument which the griping disposition of the widow could not withstand.

"Mrs. Sheridan," said Sir William, "I see you would have stood in your daughter's light by refusing her to Mullin; that is evident."

"But Mrs. Sheridan has too much good sense," observed Mr. Little, "to do so any longer—of course, father Mullin's wealth will descend to his brother's children, Mrs. Sheridan."

"Well, well, it's not in regard o' that, sure," said the widow, "but as the girl is set upon him herself, that I do it now. You're standin' there to the fore, Jim Mullin, and I never denied that you were a clane, tacent boy, and a good father's son, and who could blame me for wishin' to see my daughter settled to the best dishadvantage? She's my flesh and blood—and blood, yees all know, is thicker nor wather, any way. So, as it's all come to this, childher, may the blessin' o' the Almighty light down upon both, I pray."

"Sorra a heartier—sure, and that's the way it ought to ind anyhow," said Paul; "by the shot o' my pouch, if there's a sheep or a goat in the parish, yees must have wild fowl at the weddin', wid a blessin', and the assistance o' my Bridget. If I was for Mickle Gartland, sure no one could blame me either, and he my own fourth cousin, by the side o' the Suil-cam‡ family—ha, ha, ha!"

While Paul was speaking, the old aunt, still anxious to conclude the explanation, pushed forward to the front of the group, despite the winks, and nods, and pluckings of Mullin, who in vain attempted to keep her silent.

"Dher manum, man, I'll spake if I should burst—behave, I say—let me to the Barrow-knight. Your Lardship—(a curtesy)—and he a grand jurny-man o' the nation. Vischount, a-hagur ma chree—(a curtesy)—the beauty o' the earth you war, my Lardship—(a curtesy)—'tis in the regard o' the bouncer ye told, plase yer Reverence. Sure I didn't mane it at all, only by clearin' up Alley's charackther, nor wouldn't for the waight o' yerself o' the best goolden bank-notes that ever was coined—no, in throth, plase yer Barrow-knight—it was no lie at all at all—only a falsity, my Lard. If ye'll jist say before witness, Juke dear, that we won't be thransported, as we didn't do it, more particklerly as it was only a falsity! Will you, my Lard?"

"What, can any one tell, does that woman mean?" said Sir William.

\* Coward.

† Fighter.

‡ Suil-cam, swivel-eye—Gartland had a cast in his eye as well as Paul.

"She's the young woman's aunt," replied Little, "a simple affectionate creature, who speaks bad English; just assure her that you wont transport her, and she'll not trouble you further."

"My good woman," said Sir William, "I promise before witness, that I won't transport you—so make your mind easy."

"Ogh, I knew the true strain was in him—one o' the ould breed—kind and generosity. Musha, heaven condinn your sowl to happiness, Vischount darlin', and grant you long life and reprobation, both here and hereafter! Thank the noble gintleman, both o' yees, an' may all kinds of mutilation, an' grace, an' holiness, fall down upon you, a hagur."

During all this time, young Owen stood with his shoulder against the wall, one leg carelessly thrown across another, utterly indifferent to every thing that passed. He sucked his dudeen with as much composure as if he leant against the jamb in his own mother's house. When matters were arranged, he turned round and inquired from Paul the Shot, "Paul, which o' them—(puff)—which o' them is to have her?"

Paul looked at him with astonishment, and whispered "both, man alive. She's to be married to Mullin to-morrow, and to Gartland the day afther."

He shook his head incredulously. "Aha, Paul," he returned, "that's goin' it an' me. However, I'll find out from Alley herself."

Things having been thus arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, nothing remains now to be said, but that they had a genuine Irish wedding, to which all the personages mentioned in this sketch were invited, and that Mullin and Alley, who are now thirteen years married, have, in defiance of Malthus, thirteen children, and are happy.

#### BOTANY.—THE BOLETUS.

Boletus, or Spunk, is a genus of the order of fungi, and belonging to the cryptogamic class of plants. In Scotland and the north of Ireland, they are better known by the name of *paddock-stools*. The boletus is distinguished from the mushroom by a very striking difference; the under side of the former is covered with circular cells, that of the latter by diverging gills. Botanists enumerate one hundred and seventy species. The following are the most remarkable:—

1. *Boletus bovinus*, or cow-spunk, is frequent in woods and pastures. It is generally of a brown colour, though sometimes tawny, yellowish brown, deep red, purple, or greenish brown. The flesh is yellow, white, or reddish. The young plants are eaten in Italy, and considered a great delicacy. The Germans also account them a delicacy, calling them *gombas* and *brat-bulz*. Cows, deer, sheep, and swine will feed on this and other boleti; but they are sometimes greatly disordered by them. The milk of those cows that have fed on them has a nauseous flavour, and will not produce butter; they also cause swelling of the abdomen, inflammation of the bowels, diarrhoeas, and even death. Hence we may infer the origin of the superstition among the peasantry of their cattle being fairy-stricken; for the ignorant and uneducated being unable to perceive any natural cause for these diseases, were readily led to believe in the interference of supernatural powers. But the accurate and unremitting study of the naturalist has done, and is still doing, much to eradicate such foolish notions from the minds of the lower classes. In sheep this plant brings on scirrhus liver, cough, general wasting, and dropsy; and as they grow abundantly in old pastures, it is next to an impossibility for animals, when feeding in such places, to avoid eating some of them. *Scarabs*, *demertes*, and many other insects, feed upon and breed in them abundantly; and by these means they are kept within due bounds.

2. *Boletus ignarius*, or touch-wood spunk, is frequent on the trunks of old trees of all kinds, more especially the ash. It consists of a hard woody substance, in shape like the hoof of a horse, varying from three to nine inches in diameter. The upper side is smooth, but uneven, distinguished at the rim by elevated zones of different colours, brown, grey, tawny, &c. The flesh is of a tawny